# PARKING

**"Creating more overnight parking opportunities for our community"**

Councilmember Suja Lowenthal is committed to creating more overnight parking spaces in the Second District while promoting the use of alternative transportation in what has been identified as the most heavily parking impacted council district in the City of Long Beach.

There is a severe shortage of parking spaces in Second Council district neighborhoods such as Alamitos Beach, Bluff Heights, East Village, Hellman and Rose Park. It is not unusual for residents coming home from work to circle their block and outlying streets for nearly an hour looking for a single parking space. Young women, the elderly and residents returning from a long day of work are forced to walk home several blocks each night after parking their car. Many simply give up looking for a space and choose instead to park in red zones. As a result, a number of residents have confided in our office that they end up paying an average of $200 each month in tickets.

Several factors contribute to the shortage of spaces including remnants of cracker-box housing that was developed decades ago, a growth in two-vehicle households, an increase in multi-family units without adequate parking onsite, and illegally converted garages or split rooms. The prior council member and city staff addressed the shortage primarily through reducing red curb space and developing diagonal parking on wide streets. These solutions have run their course, but the problem remains in crisis mode.

Long Beach has one designated *Parking Impacted Area* encompassing parts of the First, Third, Fourth, Sixth, and Seventh Council districts as well as *all* of the Second Council District (see attached map). The *Parking Impacted Area* was developed through an extensive parking survey conducted with the help of a consultant to determine residential areas in which at least 75% of the on-street parking spaces were occupied at night. In order to create a continuous area and boundary lines, city staff and Council offices provided input into the final recommendations made to City Council, which adopted the area without change.

It is clear that the Second District parking problem will require a spectrum of solutions, both short and long term, to make any difference in the quality of life for residents. Therefore, Counclmember Suja Lowenthal is approaching the problem in three phases with each phase involving more complex reforms. No more than two weeks into office, Phase I began with Lowenthal proposing legislation calling upon the City Manager to make city-owned parking lots in the Second District available for residential overnight parking. In addition, she asked the City to negotiate with LBUSD for use of school lots; worked with city staff to change street sweeping on Broadway, 4ᵗʰ Street and Cherry, install street hash marks for parking efficiency, increase enforcement of illegal garages and split rooms and update all Blue Zone parking permits.

Since August 2006, Lowenthal has added approximately 1,200 new overnight parking spaces to the existing inventory and changed the way that city staff and councilmembers view the parking problem in

her district.  In Phase II, she called upon the City Attorney and Traffic Engineer to change City code, encouraging more creative parking solutions and pilot programs.  She also authored motions to make parking in front of one's driveway legal and established a moratorium on bedroom splitting inside the Second District.

In keeping with her goal to approach our city's challenges in a comprehensive way, Lowenthal has championed causes that reduce the need for cars such as encouraging Long Beach to be the most "bicycle-friendly city" in the United States, promoting pedestrian friendly development, and proposing the re-creation of a streetcar system linking downtown with other parts of Long Beach.  She has also partnered with various community members to develop a parking plan for their neighborhood, providing city departments with a local residential guide for future infrastructure projects.  These reforms have garnered attention from other cities such as Santa Monica, with hopes of using them to address their own parking problems.

Councilmember Lowenthal's accomplishments in the area of parking reform include:

## PHASE I

- Creation of 1,000 new residential overnight parking spaces.
- Joint-use of Long Beach Unified School District property
- Shifting street sweeping to a later time on Broadway and 4th Street (between Alamitos and Cherry) and Cherry (between Ocean and Broadway).
- Use of street "hash marks" on 1st Street, 2nd Street and Broadway to encourage efficient parking.
- Update of Blue Zone (disabled) parking permits

## PHASE II

- Conversion of another 200 spaces for overnight parking.
- Changes to the Municipal Code affecting red-curb length, parking in "T" intersections, 72-hour parking of work and recreational vehicles. (passed)
- Changes to the city's ordinance legalizing Driveway Parking. (proposed)
- A moratorium on bedroom splitting inside the City's Parking Impacted Area. (passed)
- Prohibit recreational vehicles and detached trailers from parking on city streets.*
- Tow unregistered vehicles and those with 5 unpaid citations taking up valuable parking spaces in the community.
- Sweep of Second District streets for work vehicles prohibited by City Ordinance.*
- Converted empty lot at 4th Street & Cherry Avenue into a temporary parking lot (approx. 25 spaces).

## PHASE III

- Convert Bonito and Cerritos Avenue (between 3rd and 4th Street) to one-way streets with diagonal parking to gain 19 additional spaces. (Approved)
- Encourage public/private conversion of blighted property into neighborhood parking structures.**
- Develop a Parking Improvement District for the purpose of raising new revenue or use existing revenue to fund solutions in the community.*
- Consider Mello-Roos District or extended RDA district along corridors to raise funding for parking structures in the community.*

Note: Asterisk * denotes efforts currently being discussed.  .

For information about parking lot location, please go to www.longbeach.gov/district2/parking